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"JOHN CHALKHILL'S" THEALMA AND CLEARCHUS  
EDITED BY IZAAC WALTON (1683)

BY

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THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT THE THESIS PREPARED UNDER MY SUPERVISION BY

Mary Honora Pendergast

ENTITLED "John Chalkhill's" Thealma and Blearchus

IS APPROVED BY ME AS FULFILLING THIS PART OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE

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in English

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## CHAPTER I

### "CHALKHILL'S" POEM Thealma and Clearchus

English literary history abounds in enigmas. One of these riddles, which I hope to bring nearer to solution, is the identity of the author of the seventeenth century poem Thealma and Clearchus issued in 1683 by the ingenious Izaak Walton, and by him attributed to "John Chalkhill".

It is a poem of the pastoral narrative type, and relates the adventures of a princess, Thealma, and her lover, Clearchus. Her father having objected to their marriage, the lovers ran away. They were ship-wrecked off the coast of Arcadia, and rescued by shepherds. Each thought the other drowned. The poem opens with Thealma, now a shepherdess, mourning the loss of her lover. Clearchus does not appear until late in the poem, after he has become king of Arcadia. The poem is unfinished, and ends when Clearchus discovers that Thealma is alive.

There are no formal divisions in the poem; but, in true pastoral style, most of the incidents or sections begin with day-break and end with the coming of night. Thus the first section opens with Thealma taking her sheep to pasture before sunrise, and ends with her going home in the evening. The following passage is a characteristic transition from one section to another.

"Night-swaying Morpheus clothes the east in black,  
And Cynthia following her brother's track  
With new and brighter rays, her self adorns,  
Lighting the starry tapers at her horns.



Homeward Anaxus and Thealma wend,  
Where we must leave them for a while. to end  
The story of their sorrows.---

Night being come,  
A time when all repair unto some home,  
Save the fisherman, that still abides  
Out-watching care in tending on the tides."<sup>1</sup>

The pastoral element is everywhere evident. The scene is laid in Arcadia, nobles masquerade as shepherds, and all life is idealized. The following lines illustrate the general tone of the poem.

"Close by the river was a thick-leav'd grove,  
Where swains of old sang stories of their love;  
But unfrequented now since Colin died,  
Colin, that king of shepherds and the pride  
Of all Arcadia: — here Thealma used  
To feed her milky droves, and as they brows'd  
Under the friendly shadow of a beech  
She sat her down; grief had tongue-tied her speech,  
Her words were sighs and tears; dumb eloquence:  
Heard only by the sobs, and not the sense."<sup>2</sup>

It is just such a tale as shepherds in Arcadia might be expected to tell while tending their sheep. Most of the stirring and dramatic incidents are not represented as happening in the story, but are told by one of the characters.

To a modern reader the unusual thing about the poem is the ingenious interweaving of the incidents, which is very difficult to follow. To add to the confusion the characters assume several names, and complicating circumstances are introduced until to have finished the poem, as Mr. Saintsbury says, "would have tasked any one out of a lunatic asylum".

The poem itself is not without attractiveness, but its interest has been overshadowed by the discussion that has

1. Chalkhill, J., Thealma and Clearchus, ll. 337-346.

2. Ibid, ll. 31-40.



arisen concerning its author. There has seemed to be a mystery here that could never be finally and definitely solved. Although Walton, the editor, stated that "John Chalkhill" was the author, yet many authorities have since, for various reasons doubted this assertion. The only means of getting at the root of this enigma is to examine the facts that have come down to us concerning the publication of the poem, to examine the opinions of the writers on the subject, and the poem itself for any clue to the solution.





CHAPTER II

CONTEMPORARY EVIDENCE CONCERNING "CHALKHILL"

The title page of Thealma and Clearchus reads as follows:

THEALMA

and

CLEARCHUS

---

A

PASTORAL HISTORY

In Smooth And Easie Verse.

---

Written Long Since

By JOHN CHALKHILL, Esq;

An Acquaintant and Friend of

EDMUND SPENCER

---

LONDON

Printed for Benj. Tooke at the Ship in S. Paul's  
Church-yard, 1683

Walton wrote the preface, which bears the date May 7, 1678, being evidently written several years before the publication of the poem. As there will be occasion to refer to this preface I quote it in full.





"The Reader will find in this book what the title declares, a Pastoral History, in smooth and easy verse; and will in it find many hopes and fears finely painted, and feelingly expressed. And he will find the first so often disappointed, when fullest of desire and expectation; and the latter so often, so strangely, and so unexpectedly relieved, by an unforeseen Providence, as may beget in him wonder and amazement.

"And the Reader will here also meet with passions heightened by easy and fit descriptions of Joy and Sorrow; and find also such various events and rewards of innocent Truth and undissembled Honesty, as is like to leave in him (if he be a good-natured reader) more sympathizing and virtuous impressions, than ten times so much time spent in impertinent, critical, and needless disputes about religion: and I heartily wish it may do so.

"And, I have also this truth to say of the author. that he was in his time a man generally known, and as well beloved; for he was humble, and obliging in his behavior, a gentleman, a scholar, very innocent and prudent: and indeed his whole life was useful, quiet, and virtuous. God send the Story may meet with, or make all readers like him.

May 7, 1678.

I. W." 1

The edition included the following commendatory lines by Thomas Flatman.

To my worthy friend Mr. Isaac Walton, on the  
the publication of this Poem

"Long had the bright Thealma lain obscure,  
Her beauteous charms that might the world allure  
lay, like rough diamonds in the mine unknown,  
By all the sons of Folly trampled on,  
Till your kind hand unveil'd her lovely face,  
And gave her vigour to exert her rays.  
Happy old man! — whose worth all mankind knows,  
Except himself, who charitably shows  
The ready road to virtue, and to praise,  
The road to many long and happy days;  
The noble arts of generous piety,  
And how to compass true felicity;  
Hence did he learn the art of living well,  
The bright Thealma was his Oracle:

1. Saintsbury, G., Caroline Poets, V.II, p.373.



Inspir'd by her, he knows no anxious cares,  
Though near a century of pleasant years;  
Easy he lives, and cheerful shall he die,  
Well spoken of by late posterity.  
As long as Spenser's noble flames shall burn,  
And deep devotions throng about his urn;  
As long as Chalkhill's venerable name,  
With humble emulation shall inflame  
Ages to come, and swell the floods of Fame:  
Your memory shall ever be secure,  
And long beyond our short-liv'd praise endure;  
As Phidias in Minerva's shield did live,  
And shar'd that immortality he alone could give.

June 5, 1683.

Tho. Flatman." 1

The only other mention Walton makes of "John Chalkhill" is found in the Complete Angler (1653), where two of the poems quoted are assigned to him. Nothing is said concerning him in the text, but his name is merely attached to these two poems. The first, Coridon's Song, is supposed to be sung by one of the characters, Coridon. The second, Oh, the Gallant Fisher's Life, is, likewise, introduced as the song of one of the characters, Piscator. "Chalkhill's" name was not affixed to this until the third edition. In a speech following this poem Piscator remarks, "Yes.... it is many years since I learned it, and having forgotten a part of it, I was forced to patch it up by the help of my invention".<sup>3</sup>

Such is the information obtainable from the earliest sources. The existence of "John Chalkhill" and his authorship of Thealma and Clearchus was not doubted until the beginning of the nineteenth century.

1. Saintsbury, G., Caroline Poets, vol. II, p. 373
2. Walton, I., Complete Angler, p. 87 and p. 174.
3. Ibid., p. 176.





## CHAPTER III

### THE HISTORY OF THE QUESTION

The spirit of investigation, so prominently a feature of the nineteenth century, led authorities to search for more facts concerning "Chalkhill". As practically nothing definite was discovered concerning him, authorities were divided into two groups, - those who believed Walton's statements and those who doubted them. In each of these groups there are varying degrees of belief and doubt. As the believers in the word of the "genial old angler" are the earlier group, we shall examine their views of the matter first.

One of the earliest of these is Joseph Ritson who in his Bibliographia Poetica (1802) includes "Chalkhill" in his list of poets, quoting Walton's authority. Another one of the group to take a like attitude is Thomas Campbell in his Specimens of the British Poets (1819).

Not all the members of this group, however, accepted the situation in such perfect faith. Difficulties in the case were pointed out, and soon supposed discoveries came forth. The first one of the group believing Walton's statement to contribute any new material to the discussion was William Beloe. In Anecdotes of Literature and Scarce Books (1807) he writes, "In a small History of Winchester, in two volumes 12 mo. printed in 1773, and written by Thomas Warton, though published without a name, is the following epitaph on Chalkhill by which it



appears that he was a Fellow of Winchester College. It is represented to be in the South Cloister, on a black marble, against the wall."<sup>1</sup> Then follows the Latin epitaph which ends with the statement that this "John Chalkhill" died May 16, 1679, at the age of eighty.

Beloe realizes the difficulty here, and explains it by saying, "It is true, however, that Walton, in his preface to Thealma and Clearchus, speaks of Chalkhill as then dead. This preface is dated May, 1678. But the poem itself was not published till 1683, when Walton himself was ninety years old; it is not improbable, therefore, that there is an error in the date, or else in the copy of the epitaph. Either of these is more probable than that there should be another John Chalkhill just at that period of a character so much corresponding to the interesting description of Walton".<sup>2</sup>

There is another difficulty with this theory which Mr. Beloe seems to have overlooked. This could not possibly be the "John Chalkhill" to whom Walton attributed the poems because this author was a friend of Spenser, who died in 1599. The John Chalkhill discovered by Mr. Beloe was eighty years old when he died in 1679, and therefore was born the year Spenser died. These two men could hardly be called "friends and acquaintants".

The next believer in Walton's statements to contribute a new theory was F. Somner Merryweather in two letters to The Gentleman's Magazine (1860). He states that,

"Among the Middlesex County records of the thirtieth to the last year of the reign of Elizabeth is the name of Ivon Chalkhill, gentleman, one of the coroners of our Lady the Queen..... Although in the records he is called Ivon Chalkhill, he subscribed himself 'Ivon' and sometimes

1. Beloe, W., Anecdotes of Literature and Scarce Books, v.1, p.70.
2. Ibid., pp.70-71.





'Jo'. His office would have made him generally known, and he must, also, have been a contemporary of Edmund Spenser."<sup>1</sup>

Merryweather explains the differences in name between the "Jo" of the Complete Angler poems, the "Ivon" of the Middlesex records, and the "John" of Thealma and Clearchus as a "printer's supposed correction of "Jo" or "Ivon" of Chalkhill's signature. A typographical error is far more probable than that an author so truthful and genial as dear old Izaak could perpetrate a literary deception."<sup>2</sup>

William Pickerton in two papers in Notes and Queries (1869) defends Walton against those who believe Walton guilty of deception, because so little is to be discovered concerning "John Chalkhill". He points out that Walton knew and often quoted obscure poets, and that there has been difficulty in identifying several of them. "A strange fatality seems to have fallen on the poets quoted by Walton. For a long time the name of Dennys was as great a secret as any that he sang about."<sup>3</sup> Yet Dennys is now given a place on the list of English authors by all authorities.

Sir Harris Nicolas in his Life of Isaac Walton prefixed to his edition of the Complete Angler (1887) mentions the relationship between Isaac Walton and a John Chalkhill. Walton's wife's stepmother was a Martha Chalkhill, a daughter of a John Chalkhill.<sup>4</sup> This Chalkhill was in his prime about 1600,

1. Merryweather, F.S., Gentleman's Magazine. 1860, v.I, pp.378-9.
2. Ibid.
3. Pickerton, W., Notes and Queries, v.IV, p.95 (1869).
4. Nicolas, H., Complete Angler, p.XCIV, (Introduction).



and could have been a friend of Spenser's. This relationship would explain how Walton should happen to possess the poems.

This John Chalkhill has not been identified with the John Chalkhill whose epitaph was discovered in Winchester Cathedral. It appears, therefore, that there were men named John Chalkhill in England at that time, and that the one who was related to Walton's wife fits Walton's statements concerning the author of Thealma and Clearchus fairly well.

Looking over all these statements as a whole, it appears that the best arguments in favor of belief in Walton's statements are the discovery of the coroner Chalkhill, referred to in the Middlesex records from 1588 to 1603, the fact that there was a John Chalkhill related to Walton, and most important of all, Walton's own statements declaring that the poems were by "John Chalkhill", a friend of Spenser. Pickerton's suggestion that several of the obscure authors quoted by Walton have finally been identified adds some weight to the case, although it can hardly be classed as a conclusive argument.

Probably the first to doubt the authorship, or at least part of it, was Mrs. Elizabeth Cooper in her Muses Library (1737). Here she says in speaking of Thealma and Clearchus, "He (Chalkhill) died before he could even perfect the fable of his poem, and by many passages in it I half believe he had not given the last hand to what he has left."<sup>1</sup> This suggestion that possibly the poem was altered by another than the author, reminds one of Walton's confession to patching up by the help of his invention Chalkhill's

1. Beloe, W., Anecdotes of Literature, v. I, p.71.





poem Oh, the Gallant Fisher's Life, quoted in the Complete Angler, (page 6)

From this time on the doubts grew bolder, but the first one openly to doubt "Chalkhill's" authorship was Samuel Singer in his introduction to a reprint of Thealma and Clearchus (1820). "He (Singer) advanced the theory...that Walton was its author as well as its editor, and that Chalkhill was altogether a fictitious character."<sup>1</sup>

Sir Egerton Bridges takes the same view in an article in the Retrospective Review (1821). He has given his reasons at length, and is one of the few writers who does so. The case for Walton's authorship, in Sir Egerton's words, is as follows:

"We have already adverted to the mysterious silence of Walton with respect to his friend's life; he neither tells us where he lived nor when he died—he gives this 'airy nothing' no 'local habitation'. Another circumstance worthy of remark is the guardedness of his praise, contrasted with the boundless eulogies of the editors and 'wit-insuring friends' of that period, and the spirit of Walton's own commendatory verses on Donne, Cartwright, Herbert, etc. He bestows his applause with the modest consciousness of an ingenious man, who, in his assumed character, felt himself obliged, yet almost afraid to commend. The two songs introduced in The Complete Angler with the name of Chalkhill attached to them bear a very close resemblance in thought and style to those confessedly the production of Walton, and, like them, are introduced without any allusion to the author or any comment on their peculiar merits, while all of the many songs introduced as the compositions of other writers are honored with a particular commendation of themselves or their authors.

"It may be considered improbable that Walton, if he were himself the author of Thealma, would have given it to the world in its present unfinished state, but it

1. Dictionary of National Biography, v. III, p.1346.



should be borne in mind, that he was in his ninetieth year when he published it, - a time of life when, in the common course of things, he had little chance of being able to bestow much attention and labour on it. It is possible that he might adopt the innocent stratagem of producing it as the work of a deceased friend, as an excuse for publishing an unfinished tale, and as a method of disarming the severity of criticism. The juvenile effusion which he had probably long kept back in the hope of being able to complete it, he might naturally be unwilling to destroy, yet afraid to hazard his established reputation. He died the same year the book was published; had he lived a little longer, the success of the work and the applauses of his friends might have induced him to lay aside his disguise, and John Chalkhill might have been expunged from the list of authors.

"If these lines (of Flatman) have any meaning, we must infer from them that Walton had some inheritance in the fame of Thealma. If applied merely to the writer of the scanty preface, they are little better than absurd; but, if written in the belief that Walton was the real, but concealed author, if not very apposite, they are, at least, intelligible.

"The internal evidence in the poem itself is strongly corroborative of our opinion. The simplicity and bonhomie which characterize the life and writings of Walton are every where perceptible. The lindliness, the pastoral taste, the keen enjoyment of rural sights and sounds, the tolerant piety, of the author of the Angler, pervade equally Thealma and Clearchus. It is just such a poem as Walton might be expected to write; it has no turbulent energy of thought or action -- it has no strongly marked character -- it displays no insight into the darker passions of the soul -- it is modest, gentle, unambitious -- and glides along as calmly and unobtrusively as one of those placid streams by which old Izaak loved to sit and ruminate.

"To prove that Walton had enough of the poet in him to produce Thealma, we need only appeal to his Angler, a work instinct with the pure spirit of unconscious poetry, and which scents all the year long of June, like a new-made haycock; a work which has delighted thousands who never handled a fishing-rod, imparting dignity and interest to the minutest details of a pursuit, singularly barren of excitement, and clothing it with an ineffable charm which cannot be effaced."





"The data on which we have founded our opinion of the identity of Chalkhill and Walton, it may be said  
' \_\_\_\_\_ are all

supposures hypothetically \_\_\_\_\_'  
but, taken together, we think they almost amount to demonstration. The non-existence of the author of Thealma, distinct from Walton; the mysterious silence of his editor, and the guardedness of his praise; the exact similarity of their tastes, feelings, and sentiments; their mutual extravagant passion for angling; altogether - in the absence of even a shadow of proof to the contrary - satisfy us, that Chalkhill is no other than our old piscatory friend incognito."<sup>1</sup>

The final statement that there is not a shadow of proof to show that "John Chalkhill" was the author is clearly an exaggeration.

Edmund Gosse (1885) is of the same opinion as Singer and Bridges.

"I have myself no doubt whatever that Izaak Walton was the author of the poem, and "John Chalkhill" a half myth, that is to say, a real person dead and forgotten so long before as not to endanger Walton's harmless mystification. At the same time, it was certainly not in May 1678, but probably thirty or thirty-five years earlier, that, as Walton would have us believe, the author died, and 'I hope the Reader will be sorry'. Flatman's poem has, I think, been overlooked, as a contemporary testimony to Walton's authorship!"<sup>2</sup>

(Bridges does mention this poem as an argument.) This view as expressed by Gosse is in a note in connection with Thealma and Clearchus, and he does not go into the reasons for his belief.

George Saintsbury, in an introduction to Thealma and Clearchus reprinted in his Caroline Poets (1906), contributed a new turn to the discussion. He reviewed the previous theories, and concluded that "if all the tales are to be taken as true, we must suppose that Thealma itself was not composed much after the

1. Bridges, E., Retrospective Review, v.4, pp.232-235 (1680).

2. Gosse, E., From Shakespeare to Pope, p. 209, (note 2).



the beginning of the seventeenth century. And the Dictionary of National Biography has as a matter of fact corrected its original rash 'fl.1678 to 'fl. 1600'.<sup>1</sup> But he does not believe either Chalkhill or Walton is the author.

"Nor yet ..... can we readily pay him (Walton) the compliment of believing that he had poetry enough to write Thealma and Clearchus."2

Although Saintsbury went into no detail, and gave no concrete reasons for his suggestion yet he pointed out the similarity between "Chalkhill" and Chamberlayne.

"The resemblance between the two", he said, "is indeed so striking that, if I were a Biblical critic, I should at once declare confidently that either Chamberlayne wrote Thealma and Clearchus or Chalkhill wrote Pharonnida, and what is more, I could bring biblical-critical arguments, external as well as internal of the purest water to support this contention."<sup>3</sup>

The last critic to take sides in this discussion was W. Macneille Dixon in English Epic and Heroic Poetry (1912). It is interesting to note that he too, possibly influenced by Saintsbury, places "Chalkhill" and Chamberlayne together. "It would be difficult to say anything of Chamberlayne that is not true of Chalkhill except that as a poet he is perhaps superior in the same manner."<sup>4</sup>

These statements show clearly that there are grounds for doubting Walton's statements, even though the evidence is only circumstantial. It cannot be denied that Walton is curiously meagre in the information he gives concerning "Chalkhill".

1. Saintsbury, J., Caroline Poets, v. II, p.370.

2. Ibid., p. 369.

3. Ibid., p. 370.

4. Dixon, W. M., English Epic and Heroic Poetry, p.239.





He at first introduced "Chalkhill's poems into The Angler as his own. It was only in a later edition that Chalkhill's name was attached to these. He makes no mention of him in the text of The Angler, which is in marked contrast to the panegyrics he inserts concerning all the other authors quoted.

The main issue in this case is the date of composition. If it can be proved with some degree of certainty that the poem was written about 1600, there seems little ground for doubting "Chalkhill's" authorship. If, on the other hand, facts can be gathered that seem to indicate it was written much later, as late say as 1640, then "Chalkhill" could hardly be the author. A man who was an "acquaintant of Spenser", even as late as 1595 (Spenser died 1599), would probably not be younger than twenty-five or thirty. Adding to his twenty-five years, the forty-five from 1595 to 1640, would make him seventy, an age so advanced that it is not plausible to suppose he would write such a poem as Thealma and Clearchus.

Practically all the arguments thus far presented on both sides of the question have been of an external character. It seems that no one has carefully examined the poem itself for light on the case. Mr. Bridges points out the similarity between the pastoral atmosphere permeating the poem and Walton's love of rural life and nature. Mr. Saintsbury says that he could produce internal evidence to prove that Thealma and Clearchus might have been written by Chamberlayne, but does not do so. These two instances comprise, I believe, all that has been done along this line of inquiry.



Since the ascertaining of the date of writing lies at the root of the problem, and no one has investigated the poem itself for evidence on this subject, I purpose to examine the poem with this aim in view. As it gives no direct evidence upon the time of its composition, such as references to persons or events, all the information from internal evidence must be indirect. It seems to me that the two main sources of this evidence are the character of the plot structure and the metrical form. By comparing these elements with those of other poems of a like kind written in the same period, the chronological position of the poem in the seventeenth century pastoral poetry may perhaps be disclosed. Such a comparison has not heretofore been made, and is therefore the object of this essay.





## CHAPTER IV

### INTERNAL EVIDENCE

#### Plot Structure

In the pastoral poetry of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth, the plots are very slight and vague. Spenser's Shepherd's Calendar (1579), the fountain head of this genre, was not a model that would induce richness and unity of action. Each of its twelve eclogues have only a slender thread of plot, and the connection between them is as loose as possible.

William Browne, that devoted admirer of Spenser, has used much the same plot structure in Britannia's Pastorals (1613). The outline of the story, or stories, in this poem is so hazy, that it is almost impossible to follow it. The shadowy figures of the "maid of England", shepherds, shepherdesses, nymphs, river gods, and such allegorical figures as Truth and Foulness, appear for a time, and then fade into the beautiful rustic setting. The poet is mainly interested in describing these pastoral scenes, and the characters seem introduced only for the purpose of adding an interesting human touch to the landscape.

This human element, however, soon began to occupy a more important place. The pastoral setting was kept, but it became only the background for the characters. One of the first poems to show this tendency was George Wither's Fair Virtue (1622), in which the story is one of the chief interests. The structure of the plot is very simple. There is only one theme, and it is clearly drawn. Phil'arete, a simple shepherd, loves the



fair nymph, Virtue. She has taught and inspired him to write poetry. Through this medium he sings her praises to visiting guests, numpes and court ladies.

The plot structure of this poem is a transition between the slight vague plots of the previous poems, and those of the next decade, in which the plots are more complex, and about which centers the main interest.

Francis Quarles' Argalus and Parthenia, published the same year as Fair Virtue, shows these new tendencies more decidedly than Fair Virtue. The plot consists of one theme clearly narrated. The poet tells the story of Parthenia, whose beauty was ruined on her wedding day by poison thrown in her face. She then refused to marry her lover, Argalus, because of this, and fled. Eventually she was cured, met her lover, and married him. But their happiness was only short-lived, because Argalus went to war and was killed. Parthenia, disguised as a knight, sought out the warrior who killed her husband, fought with him, and was also killed.

When compared with the slight, vague plots of the Shepherdes Calendar or Britannia's Pastorals, this poem shows a considerable advance in plot structure and ability in story telling. After this stage of progress was reached, however, it was several years before any new development appeared, although more poems of this genre were published in this period (1622-1637) than at any other time in the century.





Patrick Hannay's Philomela (1622), Phineas Fletcher's Britannia's Ida (Venus and Anchises story), and Shakerley Marmion's Legend of Cupid and Psyche (1637), are all conventional<sup>1</sup> mythological stories with a pastoral element in the setting.

Patrick Hannay also used the plot structure in fashion at this time in Sheretine and Mariana (1622). The scene of this poem is laid in Hungary. The lovers were separated when Sheretine went to war. Mariana was forced by her parents to marry another, and Sheretine died of a broken heart. Mariana in grief committed suicide.

The first poem to exhibit a new phase in the evolution of plot structure was Francis Kynaston's Leoline and Sydanis (1642). The story includes many incidents interwoven and interlaced into a very complex plot. The several threads of the story progress alternately. The author takes one to a certain stage of development, then leaves it, and goes back to bring forward a second one, and leaving this he carries a third thread to a similar state of completion. Eventually all the parts of the story are united.

This story opens in England with the wedding of Leoline and Sydanis. On this day the villain casts a spell on Leoline, and, to destroy this, Sydanis gets an herb from a hermit. This produces a sleep resembling death, and Sydanis, fearing she has killed her husband, goes back to the hermit, who by magic, trans-

1. Michael Drayton in Nymphidia (1622) followed his contemporaries in the form of the plot, but his characters are fairies--Queen Mab, Pigwigin, King Oberon, and Puck.





ports her to Ireland. The author now concerns himself with Sydanis in Ireland. She arrives at the king's court, and becomes a page to his daughter. Then the story returns to England again. The reader is told of Leoline's recovery from the drug, and his going to Ireland, where he fails to recognize his wife disguised as a page, and falls in love with the princess. Eventually Leoline is freed from the charm, and goes back to England. The princess in striving to follow him gets lost, and Sydanis in attempting to escape is thrown into prison.

The story ends in England, where all the threads of the plot are united. The hermit, by his magic, brings Sydanis home to Leoline, and the princess, to the prince her father had ordered her to marry. This method of unfolding the plot or parts of it, is a decided change from the simple straightforward manner of the preceding poems, and there is certainly a great difference between this type of story and the slight plot of Fair Virtue.

William Bosworth in Arcadius and Sepha (1651) uses the same method, except that instead of alternately presenting the different threads of one story, he interrupts the main plot to let different characters relate stories entirely unconnected with the main theme. The whole poem is a curiously complicated texture of stories within stories. The poet Epimenides is supposed to narrate the entire group. He tells first of Sepha's love for Arcadius. She fears that he does not love her, and flees to the temple of Dian. Just outside the temple she meets shepherds. The narration of her story is suspended while these men tell her the



stories of Bacchus and Diana and Heamon and Antigone.

The main plot is again resumed, when Sepha and Arcadius meet in the temple. Later he tells her of his love, and as they walk home, he relates to her the story of Phaon and Sappho. The thread of the plot is entirely broken at this point, while the poet Epimenides relates his life history. In the course of this narrative, he tells the story of Delithoson and Versita, lovers who were separated when a giant killed Versita. Epimenides avenges her death by killing her murderer. The chief theme is again taken up when the poet tells of meeting Arcadius. He is present at the wedding of Sepha and Arcadius, sees the thieves kill Arcadius, and take Sepha captive. He rescues Sepha, but she commits suicide before he can prevent her. Almost all the stories introduced are tragical love tales, and their unhappy endings form a link of union with the main plot and its tragic close. In general the structure of this plot is of the same type as Leoline and Sydanis. But the introduction of these stories, entirely independent of the main theme, adds a highly complicating element.

The next narrative poem published, William Chamberlayne's Pharounnida (1659), has a plot structure which is so involved and complicated, that the author evidently considered it a feat of artistic ingenuity to interweave a great number of incidents into one story. Each incident is clearly told and easy enough to follow, but it is only after several readings that all the inter-relationships begin to be clear. The method of conducting the





plot resembles that of Leoline and Sydanis, in that the parts of the plot are treated alternately. There are also several digressions that are comparable to the numerous stories introduced in Arcadius and Sepha. It is very difficult to give any idea of the plot structure by a summary of the story, because of the great number of episodes. Since this story and Thealma and Clearchus have been pointed out as having many similarities the plot of Pharonnida is given somewhat in detail for the sake of comparison.

The story of Pharonnida is as follows.

Book I. Two Christians, Argalia and Aphron, are rescued from the Turks by Aminander (Ariamnes), a Spartan. Later Argalia rescues two damsels, Corina and Florenza, from the Villain Almanzor, whom he wounds. When his followers come up Almanzor makes it appear Argalia has attacked him. Argalia is carried to the capital and tried by Pharonnida, the daughter of the king, who acts as judge. He is condemned, but liberated again when Aminander appears with Florenza, who tells the true conditions.

Some Sicilians invite the members of the court on board their ship, set out to sea, and after a battle, succeed in making away with Pharonnida. Argalia manages to secure a boat, rescue the king, and reach an island. They soon discover Pharonnida is a prisoner on this island. Argalia succeeds in killing the leader of the band and rescuing Pharonnida. For this he is made captain of her body guard on the return to the capital. Pharonnida and

1. In composing the above summary, based on my own reading of the poem, I am indebted to Mr. Saintsbury, who has most skillfully analyzed it in his introduction to Pharonnida, in Caroline Poets vol. I, pp. 7-10.





Argalia fall in love, but their happiness is disturbed by Argalia being sent by the king to make a favorable reply to an Epirot suitor.

Book II. Almanzor turns a masque into a massacre, and succeeds in abducting Pharonnida, but the people rescue her. Almanzor then instigates a rebellion, and the king is reduced almost to surrender when the Epirot prince brings aid. The Epirot is soon called home by troubles there, and Pharonnida and Argalia have another period of happiness.

At this point in the plot the story of the Platonic lovers, Acretius and Philanta, is introduced. (This is a digression)

Enemies jealous of Argalia's position induce the king to send Argalia to Epirus.

Book III. The love story of Euriolus, Mazara, Florenza, and Corina is introduced here (a second digression). The king overhears Pharonnida reading a letter from Argalia. Angered at the discovery of their love he imprisons Pharonnida in a castle, and orders the Epirot prince to make away with Argalia. The prince makes Argalia captain of a fort with orders to the real commander to execute Argalia. By a superstition of the people, Argalia is saved, only to be captured by an invading fleet.

After many adventures at sea, Argalia is finally captured by a Turkish chief, and sent to his wife to be tortured to death, but instead the wife loves Argalia. The chief discovering this love kills both himself and his wife. Argalia releases all the Christians held as slaves, seizes ships, and escapes. On the



way he rescues the Prince of Cyprus, and on reaching home releases Pharonnida.

Book IV. The episode of Orlinda and the Prince of Cyprus is inserted here (third digression). Then follows another period of happiness for the lovers, but this is interrupted by Almanzor, who at the head of a band of outlaws wounds Argalia, and abducts the princess. The villain tries to threaten Pharonnida into accepting him, and finally incloses her in a living tomb. From this she is rescued by Euriolus and Ismander. (A fourth digression then follows.) The episode of Vanlore, Amarus, and Silvandra is started but left unfinished.

Argalia's wounds were treated by a hermit, to whom he tells all he knows concerning his parentage and youth.

Book V. Pharonnida goes to a convent and is preparing to take the veil when Almanzor again captures her. This time he surrenders her to her father, but resolves on further intrigues.

Meanwhile Argalia has gone to Aetolia and fought his way to the crown which is rightfully his.

Pharonnida's father, however, refuses to accept him as her husband, and he is attacked by the Epirot prince. Almanzor steps in, murders the prince and Pharonnida's father, Cleander, (this character is unnamed until toward the end of the story) and again gains possession of Pharonnida. Argalia rescues her, kills Almanzor, and marries her. Thus ends all their troubles.

The plot of this poem is the high point in the plot structure of narrative poems during the century. A comparison of this intricate story with the simple plot of Fair Virtue shows





this remarkable development.

Since Thealma and Clearchus was not published until 1683, it is chronologically the last of those to be considered. The plot structure of this poem in several ways resembles that employed in Leoline and Sydanis. The various episodes of the plot are developed alternately, and the story is complicated by the interlacing of many incidents. Like those of Arcadius and Sepha, many of the incidents introduced are related by one of the characters, and numerous stories are inserted which have no relation to the main plot. In this poem, as in Pharonnida, the author seems to take a delight in complicating the narrative. But, unlike Camberlayne's plot, the hero and heroine play little part. Thealma appears only in the opening of the story, and Clearchus is not introduced until the poem has pursued about half its course. Furthermore the various episodes are not interwoven so closely with the main plot as they are in Pharonnida, and the pastoral element is much more prominent.

The poem, like the others of this group is very difficult to summarize because of the numerous episodes and their relationships, but the following outline may serve the present purpose. The poem opens with Thealma weeping for her lost lover, Clearchus, believing him lost in the ship-wreck from which she was rescued. She is comforted by her maid Caretta. A young man, while boar hunting, comes upon the scene, and mistakes Thealma for his loved Clarinda. He proves to be Thealma's brother, Anaxus. The first episode is left at this point, and the second is abrupt-





ly introduced.

Old Rholus, an Arcadian fisher, meets a ship from Lemnos, and sells fish to the passengers. He tells the story of Arcadia,- the old happy Arcadia, then of the evils during the reigns of wicked kings, and finally of the rescue of Alexis (Clearchus), who is now king of Arcadia. One of the passengers on the ship, Cleon, goes ashore with Rhotus. The next story goes back to the first incident, and then proceeds with a new theme.

Anaxus leaves Thealma to search for Clarinda. He happens to discover the vestals of Dian dancing in a grove when thieves rush out of the forest and try to capture them. He succeeds in driving the thieves away, but is wounded. He meets the old hermit Sylvanis, who tends his wounds. Sylvanis tells him of the late trouble in Arcadia, and how Memnon and his daughter Florimel (Clarinda) were rescued by Alexis (Clearchus), and of his becoming king.

Old Rhotus, Cleon, and Dorus, the son of Cleon, meet Thealma and Caretta. Rhotus proves to be Caretta's father, and Cleon, a retainer of Thealma's father, Cleon, tells Thealma of her father's death, and of the rescue of Alexis, whom he believes is Clearchus. Cleon and Rhotus soon proceed to court, leaving Dorus to wait on Thealma. Dorus and Caretta fall in love. In this section of the plot two of the threads are united.

Sylvanus, a soothsayer, tells Anaxus what is in store for him. He foretells that he will marry his sister (one of the complicating elements), and warns him against the temptations of a



witch. He gives him an herb as a charm against this witch, named Arandra. Anaxus meets Arandra in her magic cave, and escapes her wiles.

Alexis (Clearnus) is aroused from his mourning over the supposed loss of Thealma by the news that rebels are ravaging some of his villages. On his return after a successful expedition against these, Florimel (Clarinda) and her followers dance at the festival. Alexis (Clearnus) falls in love with her. (One of the most important complications). On the journey to the palace Alexis meets Memnon and invites him and his daughter Florimel to the court.

Alexis was troubled by a dream, and Sylvanus coming to court interpreted it. He told Alexis he was in love with two women, that he must not marry the one he loved, and that his queen would love another.

Memnon feels sure Alexis (Clearnus) is his son. (This would make him Florimel's brother.) He goes to the home of the vestal virgins, and bids Florimel to accompany him to court.

Eubolus, Anaxus' servant, induces him to see Alexis (Clearnus). Eubolus tells Anaxus of Memnon's trials. Anaxus suspects he is Cadmus, and that he knows where his daughter Florimel (Clarinda) is concealed. He goes to the cloister, manages to speak to Florimel, and she tells him of her unwillingness to go to court, and they try to devise some means of avoiding it.



Cleon and Rhotus arrive at court. Alexis again thanks Rhotus for rescuing him from the sea. Cleon finally delivers the news which he thought Alexis (Clearchus) would be most glad to hear -- "Thealma lives" -- "And here", notes the editor, "the author died, and I hope the reader will be sorry."

From the above analyses it should be obvious that in regard to plot structure, the poems of the period may be divided into three general classes. There are, first, those that have little plot, as Fair Virtue; second, those in which there is one single thread or episode, and this is handled in a clear, straight-forward manner, as in Argalus and Parthenia; and, finally, those in which the plot is composed of a great number of more or less closely related episodes, as Pharonnida. The following table gives a classification of all the poems of the period (1579-1683) according to this division.

1579	Spenser,	Shepherd's Calendar	I
1613	Browne,	Britannia's Pastorals	I
1622	Wither,	Fair Virtue	I
	Quarles,	Argalus and Parthenia	II
	Hannay,	Philomela	II
	"	Sheretina and Mariana	II
	Drayton,	Nymphodia	II
1628	Fletcher,	Brittain's Ida	II
1637	Marmion,	Cupid and Psyche	II
1642	Kynaston,	Leoline and Sydanis	III
1651	Bosworth,	Arcadius and Sepha	III
1659	Chamberlayne,	Pharonnida	III
1683	"Chalkhill",	Thealma and Clearchus	III

- I Slight or vague type of plot
- II Simple and clear type of plot
- III Complicated type of plot







From this table it appears that there is a relationship between the date of writing and the type of plot structure used. The plot of Thealma and Clearchus is evidently the last group, and would seem to have been written some time after 1640.

If Thealma and Clearchus was written about 1600, as is commonly supposed, the author was forty years ahead. It does not seem plausible that "Chalkhill" should anticipate just the course that plot development took, and arrive at a form which included elements of plot structure, evolved by the combined efforts of a long line of writers who worked after him. Furthermore, writers employ in general the type of plot in vogue at the time of writing. With such poems as Shepherdes Calendar and Britannia's Pastorals in favor, it is not likely that a poet would write a poem so radically different as Thealma and Clearchus. This piece of evidence, therefore, would seem to indicate that the poem was written probably forty years later than the date usually supposed.



Metrical Form

The metrical form is often an aid in determining the time of composition. Just as in the case of their plots, certain peculiarities are in fashion at certain times. The majority of the narrative poems written between 1600 and 1683 are in couplets. In examining the metrical form of these poems, therefore, it is convenient to use the mechanical scheme that has been adopted to show the development of the couplet. I have examined these poems in order to ascertain whether any historical development is perceptible, particularly with regard to "run on" line, "run on" couplet, and the position of the cesura.<sup>1</sup>

Edmund Spenser's Shepherd's Calendar (1579) is written in a variety of meters. The passages written in couplets are very regular, having few "run on" lines and couplets. The following passage is a typical example of the parts of the poem written in couplets.

"The soveraigne of seas he blames in vaine,  
That, once sea-beate, will to sea againe:  
So loytring live you little heardgroomes,  
Keeping your beastes in the budded broomes:  
And, when the shinning sunne laugheth once,  
You deemen the Spring is come attonce;  
The gynne you, fond flyes! the cold to scorne,  
And, crowing in pypes made of greene corn,  
You thinke to be Lords of the yeare:  
But eft, when ye count you freed from feare,  
Comes the breme Winter with chamfred broves,  
Full of wrinckles and frostie furrows,  
Drerily shooting his stormy darte,

1. For the principles and applications of this scheme, see Alden, R. M., English Verse, 1903.



Which cruddles the blood and pricks the harte:  
Then is your carelesse corage accoied,  
Your careful heards with cold bene annoied:  
Then paye you the price of your surquedrie,  
With weeping, and wayling, and misery."<sup>1</sup>

In William Browne's Brittania's Pastorals (1613) the couplets are much looser than in Shepherd's Calender. The following lines are representative of the verse structure.

"Then walked they to a grove but near at hand,  
Where firey Titan had but small command,  
Because the leaves, conspiring, kept his beams,  
For fear of hurting (when he's in extremes)  
The under flowers, which did enrich the ground  
With sweeter scents than in Arabia found.  
The earth doth yield (which they through pores exhale)  
Earth's best of odours, th' aromaticall:  
Like to that smell which oft our sense describes  
Within a field which long unploughed lies,  
Somewhat before the setting of the sun;  
And where the rainbow in the horizon  
Doth pitch her tips; or as when in the prime,  
The earth being troubled with a drought long time,  
The hand of heaven his spongy clouds doth strain,  
And throws into her lap a shower of rain,  
She sendeth up, conceived from the sun,  
A smell perfume and exhalation." <sup>2</sup>

In the passage examined there were found twenty "run on" lines and couplets.

Since Thealma and Clearchus is supposed to have been written in this period, it is interesting to contrast the excessively loose type of its metrical form with those of its supposed contemporaries. "Chalkhill's" couplets are remarkably freer than those of either of the other two poems. Out of the hundred lines there were found to be sixty "run on" lines and thirty-two "run on" couplets. These lines are a fair example of the rapid and free movement of "Chalkhill's" verse.

1. Spenser, E., The Shepherd's Calendar, C.E. Herford edition (1914).  
Februarie, ll. 33-50

2. Browne, W., Brittania's Pastorals. Book I song 2, ll. 325-343.





"The pirates steal aboard, and by good hop,  
Without suspect, they fell into the trap  
Anaxocles had laid: for wisely, he  
Divides his fleet in squadrons, which might be  
Ready on all sides: every squadron had  
Four ships well mann'd, that where'er the foe made  
He might be met with; one kept near shore,  
Two kept at sea, the other squadron bore  
Up tow'rd the isle, yet with a wheeling course,  
Not so far distant, but the whole fleet's force  
Might quickly be united if need were.  
Between these came the pirates without fear,  
Making tow'rds th' Acadian shore, where soon  
Th' Arcadians met them; now the fight began,  
And it was hot, the foe was three to one,  
And some big ships: Anaxocles alone  
Gave the first onset. Cynthia then shone bright,  
And now the foe perceives with whom they fight,  
And they fought stoutly, scorning that so few  
Should hold them back so long: then nearer drew  
The two side squadrons, and were within shot  
Before they spied them; now the fight grew hot:  
Despair put valour to the angry foe,  
And bravely they stand to't, give many a blow."<sup>1</sup>

George Wither's Fair Virtue, and Francis Quarles'

Argalus and Parthenia are the next narrative poems published (1622).

These were both written in couplets of a freer character than those of Spenser and Browne, but not nearly so free as those of Chalkhill. In the passages from these there was found to be thirty "run on" lines and eleven "run on" couplets.

Several of the narrative poems published in the next few years were not written in couplets, - Patrick Hannay's Philomela (1622, Michael Drayton's Nymphedia (1622), Phineas Fletcher's Brittain's Ida (1628), and Francis Kynaston's Leoline and Sydanis (1642).

The next poem written in couplets was Shakerley Marmion's Legend of Cupid and Psyche published in 1677. This again shows an

1. Chalkhill, John, Thealma and Clearchus, ll. 2287-2710.



increase in "run on" lines and "run on" couplets. It seems that the later in the century the poem appeared the more "run on" lines and couplets it possesses. William Bosworth's Arcadius and Serha (1651) has fifty-four "run on" lines and twenty-eight "run on" couplets.

William Chamberlayne's Pharonnida (1659) is, except Thealma and Clearchus (1683), the latest one published, and it shows the greatest overlapping, with seventy-eight "run on" lines and forty-three "run on" couplets. A comparison of the passage quoted from Thealma and Clearchus and the following one from Pharonnida will show this. These two poems are written in the excessively overlapped, enjambed "run on" couplets.

"When, fearing tears should win  
The victory of anger, Ammurat draws  
His cimetar, which had in blood writ laws  
For conquered provinces, and with a swift  
And cruel rage, ere penitence could lift  
Her burthened soul in a repentant thought  
Towards heaven, sheathes the cold steel in her soft  
And snowy breast. With a loud groan she falls  
Upon the bloody floor, half breathless, calls  
For his untimely pity; but perceiving  
The fleeting spirits, with her blood, were leaving  
Her heart unguarded, she employs that breath  
Which yet remained, not to bewail her death,  
But beg his life that caused it -- on her knees  
Struggling to rise." 1

Arranging the results of this investigation in a table it appears that there is a distinct relation between the date and the peculiarities of the couplet employed.

1. Chamberlayne, W., Pharonnida, Book III, Canto 4, ll.220-234.





	Edmund Spenser's "Shepherd's Calendar"	William Browne's "Britannia's Pastorals"	George Wither's "Fair Virtue"	Francis Quarles's "Argalus and Parthenia"	Shakerley Marmion's "Cupid and Psyche"	William Bosworth's "Arcadius and Sepha"	William Chamberlayne's "Pharonnida"	"Chalkhill's" "Thealma and Clearchus"
Date	1579	1613	1622	1622	1637	1657	1659	1683
"run on" lines	9	20	30	30	41	54	78	60
"run on" couplet	9	20	11	11	26	28	43	32
medial cesura	14	50	14	32	37	43	62	60
no cesura	67	41	43	43	53	47	25	34
variant cesura	19	9	43	25	10	10	12	6

Note: The figures indicate the respective occurrence in one hundred lines.

The date of writing of Thealma and Clearchus judging from this table is about 1651. If "Chalkhill" wrote it about 1600, he has curiously employed verse peculiarities that it took more than forty years for his successors to evolve step by step, an hypothesis hardly credible. The metrical evidence and the plot structure indicate that the poem was written not less than forty years after 1600.



## CHAPTER V

### THE QUESTION OF THE AUTHORSHIP

The internal evidence derived from a comparative examination of the plot structure and metrical form seems clearly to point toward the date of writing as some time after 1640. When this evidence is coupled with the fact that nothing positive has been discovered concerning "John Chalkhill", the author of Thealma and Clearchus and "friend of Spencer", that Flatman's poem, the only contemporary statement outside of Walton's, praises the editor instead of the author, and that Walton, the authority for the statement that "John Chalkhill" was the author of the poem, gave so little information concerning the author, when all this internal and external evidence is united there seems good reason for believing, with Mr. Singer, "that Chalkhill was altogether a fictitious character". The internal evidence would indicate that the "John Chalkhill" described by Walton could not be the author of Thealma and Clearchus, because a man spoken of as a friend of Spencer, who died in 1599, would hardly be writing poetry in 1640 or later.

The next question that naturally arises is, who really was the author of Thealma and Clearchus? Practically all the evidence points toward Walton. To begin with the poem was in his possession. If this fact is explained by the assertion that the poem was written by his relative, this would explain how he had access to "Chalkhill's" papers. But why does not Walton mention that the poem was written by a relative? Most people would be proud of being related to an author. The fact that Walton had a relative





named Chalkhill might also be used to explain why he happened to choose that name when publishing Thealma and Clearchus.

The date of composition indicated by the internal evidence, sometime after 1640, curiously coincides with the period of Walton's literary activity, 1640-1678. His Lives were published between 1640 and 1678, and the Complete Angler in 1657.

The believers in the honesty of the Angler refuse to believe Walton was the author of Thealma and Clearchus because of their faith in his veracity. But they forget that many honest men have indulged in a like artifice before and since. They overlook the fact that Walton sometimes presented things as he wished them to be. As in his life of Donne, he entirely ignores the rather wild early years of Donne. He evidently knew of this period in Donne's life, because everyone else seems to have, and Walton's Life of Donne (1640) was not published for seven years after the publication of Donne's Poems (1633). These would have given this information if he had had no other source. Yet Walton preferred to portray the pious and well loved Dean of St. Paul's. Of course, he could not be called dishonest because of this, but it is undoubtedly a case of suppressing facts; and it is just this that Walton is accused of in the publication of Thealma and Clearchus.<sup>1</sup>

1. This is not the only place where Walton misrepresents facts. There are several instances of this in the Complete Angler; as when he applies to his own purpose a passage from Dr. Peter du Moulin (Nicolas edition, p.40). He misquotes Sir Henry Wotton's "On a Bank as I Sat A Fishing" (p.54), and John Donne's Come and Live with Me and Be My Love (p.58), and he transposes and varies without acknowledgment of the changes George Herbert's Contemplation on God's Providence, (p.44).





In connecting "Chalkhill" and Walton, it is interesting to note the very close similarity between the poems given in The Complete Angler. "Chalkhill's" O the Gallant Fisher's Life and Walton's The Angler's Wish are comparatively short and quoted in full below.

Oh, the Gallant Fisher's Life

Oh, the gallant fisher's life,  
It is the best of any,  
'Tis full of pleasure, void of strife,  
And 'tis below'd of many:  
    Other joys  
    Are but toys,  
    Only this  
    Lawful is,  
    For our skill  
    Breeds no ill,  
But content and pleasure.

In a morning up we rise  
Ere Aurora's neeping,  
Drink a cup to wash our eyes,  
Leave the sluggard sleeping;  
    Then we go  
    To and fro,  
    With our knacks  
    At our backs,  
    To such streams  
    As the Thames,  
If we have the leisure.

When we please to wall abroad  
For our recreation,  
In the fields is our abode.  
Full of delectation:  
    Where in a brook  
    With a hook,  
    Or a lake  
    Fish we take,  
    There we sit  
    For a bit,  
Till we fish entangle.



We have gentles in a horn,  
We have paste and worms too;  
We can watch both night and morn,  
Suffer rain and storms too;  
    None do here  
    Use to swear,  
    Oaths do fray  
    Fish away,  
    We sit still,  
    Watch our quill,  
Fishers must not wrangle.

If the sun's excessive heat  
Makes our bodies swelter,  
To an osier hedge we get  
For a friendly shelter,  
    Where in a dike  
    Perch or Pike,  
    Roach or Dace  
    We do chase,  
    Bleak or Gudgeon  
    Without grudging,  
We are still contented.

Or we sometimes pass an hour  
Under a green willow,  
That defends us from a show'r,  
Making earth our pillow;  
    There we may  
    Think or pray  
    Before death  
    Stops our breath;  
    Other joys  
    Are but toys  
And to be lamented. -- Jo. Challhill"<sup>1</sup>

#### The Angler's Wish

"I in these flowery meads would be:  
These crystal streams should solace me;  
To whose harmonious bubbling noise  
I with my angle would rejoice.  
Sit here, and see the turtle-dove  
Court his chaste mate to acts of love.

1. Walton, I., Complete Angler (edited by Nicolas) p. 174.





Or, on that bank, feel the west wind,  
Breathe health and plenty: please my mind,  
To see sweet dewdrops kiss these flowers,  
And then washed off by April showers;  
Here, hear my Kenna sing a song  
There, see a blackbird feed her young,  
Or a leverock build her nest.  
Here, give my weary spirits rest  
And raise my low-pitch'd thoughts above  
Earth, or what poor mortals love;  
Thus, free from lawsuits and the noise  
Of princes' courts, I would rejoice.

Or, with my Byran and a book,  
Loiter long days near Showford brook,  
There sit by him, and eat my meat,  
There see the sun both rise and set;  
There bid good-morning to next day,  
There meditate my time away,  
And angle on; and beg to have  
A quiet passage to a welcome grace."<sup>1</sup>-- I. Walton.

Both poems express a keen delight in quiet rural joys,  
and especially in angling. Both eulogize the pleasure of loitering

"Under a green willow",  
"Or on that bank, feel the west wind  
Breathe health and plenty."

And of the delight of being off to the "flowery meads",

"There see the sun both rise and set,  
There bid good-morning to next day;"

No one, I think, after reading The Angler can fail to realize how  
completely O the Gallant Fisher's Life catches and expresses the  
pervading spirit of The Angler,-- even Izaak's interest in baits is  
expressed. In the last stanza is a religious sentiment that might  
be expected of the friend and biographer of so many clergymen.

"Making earth our pillow  
Where we may  
Think and pray  
Before death  
Stays our breath."

1. Walton, I., Complete Angler, (edited by H. Nicolas) p. 110.



The Complete Angler is permeated with a genuine love for the pastoral, and throughout there is an ever present poetic idealization. Walton shows the beauties of rural life, but none of its inconveniences. The rain falls so gently in Walton's country that the anglers can sit snugly and chat in the shade of some neighboring sycamore, while the flowers are "washed off by April showers".

Thealma and Clearchus is pervaded by a like spirit. There is a pervading pastoral tone, and quiet movement that one would naturally imagine as appealing to Walton.

Those who do not believe that Walton was enough of a poet to write Thealma and Clearchus forget that Walton wrote several poems about as truly poetical as the two assigned to "Chalkhill" in The Angler. The following lines of Walton on Cartwright illustrate Walton's couplet verse structure.

"I cannot keep my purpose, but must give  
Sorrow and verse their way; nor will I grieve  
Longer in silence; no, that poor, poor part  
Of nature's legacy, verse void of art,  
And undissembled tears, Cartwright shall have  
Fixt on his hearse; and went into his grave.

Muses, I need you not; for grief and I  
Can in your absence weave an elegy;  
Which we will do; and often interweave  
Sad looks, and sighs; the groundwork must receive  
Such characters or be adjudg'd unfit  
For my friend's shroud; others have show'd their wit,  
Learning, and language fitly; for these be  
Debts due to his great merits; but for me,  
My aims are like myself, humble and low,  
Too mean to speak his praise, too mean to show  
The world what it hath lost in losing thee,  
Whose words and deeds were perfect harmony.

But now 'tis lost, lost in the silent grave,  
Lost to us mortals, lost till we shall have  
Admission to that kingdom, where he sings  
Harmonious anthems to the King of kings.  
Sing on, blest soul! be as thou wast below,





A more than common instrument to show  
Thy Maker's praise: sing on, whist I lament  
Thy loss, and court a holy discontent,  
With such pure thoughts as thine, to dwell with me,  
Then I may hope to live and die like thee --  
To live belov'd, die mourn'd; thus in my grave  
Blessings that kings have wished, but cannot have."<sup>1</sup>

The following passage from Thealma and Clearchus has a somewhat similar theme, and illustrates the similarity of treatment and tone.

"Such was Thealma's state,  
When tears would give her heart no ease, her grief  
Broke into speech to give her some relief:  
'Oh, my Clearchus', said she, and with tears  
Enbalms his name: - 'Oh! if the ghosts have ears,  
Or souls departed condescend so low,  
To sympathize with mortals in their woe;  
Vouchsafe to lend a gentle ear to me,  
Whose life is worse than death, since not with thee.'"<sup>2</sup>

But a more remarkable resemblance is found in metrical structure of the two poems. There are thirty lines in Walton's poem, and in it are sixteen "run on" lines and ten "run on" couplets. This is practically the same percent as found in the hundred lines from Thealma and Clearchus, which had sixty "run on" lines and thirty-two "run on" couplets.

All these internal and external circumstances, together with those pointed out by authorities on the subject, would seem strongly to indicate that Thealma and Clearchus was written not less than forty years later than is commonly believed, and the evidence pointing to Isaac Walton as the author gives meaning to the contemporary lines addressed to Walton by Thomas Flatman,

1. Nicolas, H., Life of Walton, p. XXXIII.

2. Chalkhill, J., Thealma and Clearchus, ll. 66-74.





"As long as Chalkhill's venerable name,  
With humble emulation shall inflame  
Ages to come, and swell the floods of fame:  
Your memory shall ever be secure."<sup>1</sup>

1. Flatman, T., To My Worthy Friend Isaac Walton.



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